



THE DYRS APPROACH: EDUCATION

April 2013

General Approach

At DYRS, we are working hard to improve educational outcomes for youth committed to our care. Increasingly, DYRS youth are reaching important educational markers, such as obtaining high school diplomas or GEDs, and achieving levels of literacy necessary to enter the workforce. For example, in fiscal year 2012:

- **190** youth received educational support services in the community through DYRS and DC YouthLink, including tutoring, GED/SAT prep courses, and placement assistance.
- Youth spent more than **4,000 hours** in tutoring programs through DC YouthLink. These included basic courses as well as GED/SAT preparation.
- **90** youth achieved 8th grade level literacy and tutoring gains necessary to participate in workforce development programs.
- **46** youth earned their high school diploma or GED.
- **12** DYRS youth enrolled in colleges and universities such as Delaware State, Morgan State, UDC, Potomac College, West Virginia University.
- At the Maya Angelou Academy (New Beginnings), youth:
 - Earned an average of **92%** of all potential credits
 - Improved their math and reading scores by an average **1.8** grade levels

Ongoing and New Initiatives in Fiscal Year 2013

DYRS focused on a number of new and continuing education initiatives in fiscal year 2013. These included:

- Establishing a dedicated Education Office at DYRS to provide content knowledge and technical support to case managers and other key DYRS personnel on education matters
- Improving communication with agency partners, such as DC Public Schools, regarding the placement and movement of committed youth
- Providing targeted post-secondary application support and assistance to youth with GEDs and high school diplomas
- Reconnecting older youth without GEDs or high school diplomas to community-based education programs

Looking Ahead

In fiscal year 2014, DYRS will be working to improve on educational outcomes for our youth by focusing on the following key initiatives:

- *Monitoring and supporting first-time 9th graders to ensure successful promotion to 10th grade.* We have other initiatives in the works such as boosting youth's successful completion of the 9th grade. Youth who successfully complete 9th grade the first time are up to four times more likely to graduate from high school.
- *Implementing an MOA with DCPS and OSSE regarding transitions back into schools in the community.* We know that changing schools can be difficult and disruptive for youth. On average, youth lose two months of school with every transition. To address these concerns, we will be entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with DCPS and OSSE to ensure credits transfer when youth return from out-of-state placements or New Beginnings to schools in the community. We are taking on this issue more broadly.
- *Decreasing number of school changes.* When making placement decisions, we are trying to decrease the number of school changes.